# NATIONAL SCHOOL For The Banjo. ALFRED A.FARLAND

# NATIONAL SCHOOL

—FOR THE—

# BANJO,

\_\_\_BY\_\_\_

ALFRED A. FARLAND.

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#### PREFACE.

The want of a method containing a complete, systematic course of instruction has long been felt by conscientious teachers of the Banjo, and this want "National School" aims to fill.

In its preparation care has been taken to make it entertaining as well as instructive, and while the author has endeavored to render the exercises, études, etc., full and complete, he has, at the same time, tried to make them as attractive as possible, consistent with usefulness.

Those who only desire to learn simple chords will find the same arranged in easy accompaniment form in all keys. The études make it comparatively easy for more ambitious students to learn the chords in the "Positions," and if they will learn the notes which form each chord as well as their location upon the Banjo, they can not fail to acquire a thorough knowledge of the fingerboard.

As the correct management of the right hand is as essential to a good execution as that of the left, the author desires to call special attention to the system of alternate fingering taught in this work, and earnestly requests students to play all scales, exercises, etc., with the fingers indicated by the signs, assuring them that while their progress may be a little slower in the beginning, they will, after having mastered this system of fingering, be amply repaid for lost (?) time in being able to play with ease passages heretofore considered impossible to execute upon the Banjo with good effect. The fact that those who master this system of fingering are able to play scales (both diatonic and chromatic) extending over several octaves as rapidly as the same can be played upon any other instrument should be sufficient proof of its superiority.

It should not be inferred from the above that the proper management of the left hand is of no consequence, as the importance of fingering correctly with both hands can not be overestimated. It is safe to say that students who will not take the trouble to finger correctly can never become more than mediocre performers.

The author earnestly recommends teachers under no circumstances to advance the pupil from one exercise to another until the previous one is played *correctly* and with as much fluency as the progress of the pupil will admit. The degree of rapidity with which anything is played may be conceded to the age or ability of the student, but respecting the correctness of it there mustable no compromise.

In conclusion, the author desires to state that this work is not an experiment. Every portion of it has been subjected to that best of all tests—actual use in teaching, and with the most gratifying results.

#### GUIDE TO PRACTICE.

Fixed hours should be appointed for practice when possible, and those who expect to make anything like rapid progress should practice at least two hours per day, devoting (when sufficiently advanced) the first portion of every hour to scales, exercises and études. Those who do this will make more progress in one month than can be made in six by those who do not.

Practice very slowly at first, and when a passage is played correctly increase the speed to the desired degree. If a mistake is made do not pass on, but recommence the passage, and continue doing so until it can be played correctly throughout.

If one or more measures are found more difficult than the rest, practice them until they can be readily executed, after which practice the whole passage.

Do not expect your teacher to give you something new at every lesson unless you can play the previous one correctly and quite rapidly, and bear in mind that no piece or passage is played correctly until not a wrong finger is used, not a wrong string is struck, not a finger up when it ought to be down (this refers to sliding a finger of the left hand from one fret to another), the hands held in a proper position, every note played clearly and distinctly, and the piece or passage played in proportion throughout.

No piece should be considered sufficiently practiced which can not be played at least eight or ten times in succession without an error, and even when this can be accomplished, more practice is necessary in order to acquire more finish in the manner of executing it. If, on resuming the practice of it on another occasion, it should be incorrect (as will frequently be the case), it should be practiced over and over again until it can be with a certainty played correctly.

In a word-Practice until Perfect.

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#### ELEMENTARY.

Musical sounds are expressed by characters called notes, which are written on and in the spaces between five parallel lines called the staff. \_\_\_\_\_\_ The lines and spaces are counted from the bottom upwards.

As the staff is not of sufficient extension to express all the sounds in music, ledger lines are added above and below it when required.

The notes are named after the first seven letters of the alphabet, viz.: A,B,C,D,E,F,G, and they are distinguished by their position on the staff.

istinguished by their position on the staff. In banjo music the Treble, or G Clef, is used to establish their names. It is placed on the second line,

consequently the note on that line is called G, or the Clef note.

The names of all the other notes can be ascertained by reckoning alphabetically in ascending from the clef note; and by reversing the order of the alphabet in descending from it.



Students will observe that notes of the same name occur several times, but always in a different position on the staff.



The above should be studied until the notes in the following exercise can be readily named.





The following scale, showing where the notes are made upon the Banjo, is intended as a mental study, and should be committed to memory: The figures indicate the frets at which the notes are made. O signifies an "open" string.

#### Scale.



The note in the fourth space is always written with a double stem or marked 0 when it is to be made on the fifth string.

#### Character and Value of the Notes, Rests, etc.

As musical sounds may be long or short, their duration or value is indicated by a particular form of

The longest sound in general use is designated by a whole note o the duration of which is determined by counting four.

A sound continued but half as long, that is, while counting two, is expressed by a half note of.

The duration of a quarter note - is but one count.

An eighth note I is only half as long (in time) as a quarter.

A sixteenth note is half as long as an eighth, and a thirty-second in half as long as a sixteenth. When several eighth, sixteenth, or thirty-second notes follow in succession they are usually connected by bars placed across their stems, as shown in the following table:

#### TABLE OF THE NOTES AND THEIR PROPORTIONS.

One whole note	1
Is equal to two half notes	
Or four quarter notes	
Or eight eighth notes	
Or sixteen sixteenth notes	
Or thirty-two thirty-second notes	*****

When two or more notes that have the same situation on the staff are connected by a slur they are to be performed as one note, the duration of which is equal to the time of them all combined.

Three notes, with a figure three placed over or under them, form what is called a triplet.

They are to be played in the time of two notes of the same kind.

A figure six placed over or under six notes signifies that they are to be played in the time of four.

The grace note is a small note placed before a large one. \_\_\_\_ It is generally given half the time of the principal note, which must, of course, be made that much shorter.

When the grace note has a line drawn through it, thus it is played very quickly, and takes but ver-

y little time from the note before it.

Notes have corresponding rests, which denote silence. They have the same value in time as the notes to which they correspond.

Whole rests are placed under a line. - Half rests over a line. - Quarter rests are written thus, 7 or or Z. Eighth rests are turned to the left. 7 Sixteenth rests have two heads 7 and thirty-second rests have three.

A dot placed after a note or rest increases its value one half; consequently a dotted half note or rest ... is equal in time to three quarters; a dotted quarter note or rest is equal to three eighths, etc.

#### Time.

Music is divided into equal portions of time by vertical lines called bars. \_\_\_\_\_ The music between two bars is called a measure.

In common time, marked thus, cor ach measure contains the value of four quarternotes, as indicated by the figures.

In  $\frac{\kappa}{4}$  time each measure contains the value of two quarter notes, etc.

In all cases the upper figure in the time mark indicates the number, and the lower figure the kind, of notes in each measure.

In  $\frac{3}{8}$  time count three to each measure and play one eighth note, or its equivalent, to each count.

In  $\frac{6}{8}$  time count two to each measure and play three eighth notes, or their equivalent, to each count.

In  $\frac{4}{4}$ ,  $\frac{2}{4}$  or  $\frac{6}{8}$  time accent the first and middle of each measure,

In  $\frac{3}{4}$ ,  $\frac{3}{8}$  or  $\frac{9}{8}$  time accent the first count only.

#### Exercises in Time on Open Strings.

(See directions for Right Hand Fingering on page 7.)

on the second string. Count the time aloud. Make G sharp



Sharps, Flats, etc.

An interval is the distance between two sounds. The smallest interval is called a half-tone and is found on the Banjo between any fret and the next. That is, a string stopped at the second fret will sound a half tone higher than it will when stopped at the first, etc.

A tone consists of two half tones.

A sharp # placed before a note raises it a half tone, and a flat placed before a note lowers it ahalf tone. To illustrate this on the Banjo we will take the note G, which is made on the third string at the third being a half tone higher is made at the fourth fret (the open second string gives the same sound), and G flat being a half tone lower than G, is made at the second fret.

A natural a restores a note that has been made sharp or flat to its original tone.

A double sharp z raises a note already made sharp still another half tone, and a double flat by lowers a note already made flat still another half tone.

A note that has been double sharped or double flatted is restored to its quality of once sharped or flatted by # or ...

When these characters occur occasionally they are called accidentals and affect all the following notes of the same name in the measure in which they occur.

Sharps or flats placed after the clef are called the signature and designate what key the piece is in. When so placed they affect all notes throughout the piece bearing the same name as the lines and spaces upon which they are placed.

Scales.

The first note of a scale is the tonic, or key note. The eighth is the octave, and the seventh is the leading note, which must always be a half tone below the octave.

If C is the key note the scale is in the key of C; if D, it is in the key of D, etc.

The major diatonic scale is composed of five tones and two half tones, the latter coming only between the third and fourth and the seventh and eighth notes, as shown in the following scale of C major.

If any other note than C is taken as the key note the half tones will be displaced, consequently sharps or flats must be employed to raise or lower one or more notes of the scale in order to restore the half tones to their proper places. Example: 🛣 To avoid prefixing the sharps or flats to the notes as they occur throughout the piece, they are placed and called the signature, as explained above. after the clef,

Students should now write scales, commencing with G, D, A, E, B and F#, using sharps to preserve the proper order of intervals, and with F, Bb, Eb, Ab and Db, using flats to preserve the proper order of intervals, noting how many sharps or flats form the signature of each key.

The minor diatonic scale is also composed of five tones and two half tones, the latter coming between the second and third and the seventh and eighth of the ascending scale, and between the fifth and sixth and the second and third of the descending scale. The sixth and seventh of the ascending scale must be raised a half tone by accidentals—the seventh because every ascending scale must have a leading note, and the sixth in order that the interval between the sixth and seventh may not be greater than atone, as the diatonic scale must consist of tones and half tones.

Every major key has a relative minor, which has the same signature as the major.

The sixth note of a major scale is the key note of its relative minor.

Students should now write the relative minor of each major scale, raising the sixth and seventh a half tone by accidentals in ascending only.

The major key note is the first above the last sharp and the third below the last flat in the signature, not counting the degree upon which the sharp or flat occurs.

The chromatic scale is composed of half tones only and is written in various ways. In the key of A it is written as follows, sharps and double sharps being used in ascending, and naturals and flats in descending.

#### CHROMATIC SCALE.



#### Transposition.

In the following example a part of "Sweet Home" is transposed from F to A and from A to E.



Students should observe that in transposing from F to A each note is written a third higher, that being the distance from F to A. E is a fourth lower than A, consequently in transposing from A to E every note is written a fourth lower. In counting thirds, fourth, etc., the first and last notes must be included.

#### Common Characters used in Music.

Double Bars mark the end of a strain. Dots signify repetition. D.C. means from the beginning. A pause or the word Fine at a double bar shows that the piece is to end there. The figures 1 and 2 placed at the end of a strain that is to be repeated signify that, in playing it the second time, the part marked 1 is to be omitted and that marked 2 played instead. When the sign appears the second time the performer must return to where it first appeared and play to the end. A placed over a note or rest signifies that the performer is to pause as long as he thinks proper. This sign X signifies repetition of the foregoing measure or group of notes.

#### Marks of Expression, etc.

mf., moderately loud; f., loud; ff., very loud; p., soft; pp., very soft; Cres. or —, increase the tone; Decres.or —, decrease the tone; Dim., diminish the tone; Dim. al Fine, diminish the tone to the end; Dolce, soft and sweet; Con brio, with splendor and brilliancy; fz. or >, with force, emphasis; Brilliante, showy; Calando, softer and slower; Con amore, affectionately; Con passion, with passion; Rall., slower and softer; Andante, slow; Adagio, very slow; Allegro, quick; Allegretto, not so quick; Presto, very quick; Veloce, as quick as possible; Rit., slacken the time; A tempo, in time; Accellerando, faster and faster; Cadenza, embellishment at the close; Coda, an extra passage at the end; Finale, the last movement; Bis, twice; 8—, an octave higher; Ad lib., at pleasure; Loco, as written.

#### How to Tune the Banjo.

The strings are numbered from one to five, the short string being the fifth. Tune the third in unison with the fourth string stopped at the seventh fret; the second in unison with the third string stopped at the fourth fret; the first in unison with the second string stopped at the third fret; and the fifth in unison with the first string stopped at the fifth fret.

When two strings are in unison if one is struck the other will vibrate.

If a piano or organ is at hand tune to the following notes

4th. 3rd. 2nd. 1st. 5th.

To play pieces marked 4th to B, tune the bass string in unison with the first.

#### How to Hold the Banjo.

Sit upright and rest the rim on the right thigh, pressing the upper part lightly to the breast with the fore arm. Support the neck in the hollow of the left hand between the finger and thumb and curve the fingers so that the tips can be used in pressing the strings to the fingerboard.

#### Left Hand Fingering.

Figures are employed to indicate the left hand fingering\_0, open string; 1, first finger; 2, second finger, etc.

When a line connects two figures, 2-2, slide the finger indicated to the required fret without rais-

When two notes are connected thus sound the first with a finger of the right hand and the second by pulling or snapping the string with the finger of the left hand employed in making the first.

If the second note is highest sound the first as before and let a finger of the left hand descend with force upon the second, which must sound from the mere impulse of this finger. This is called slurring and is much used in playing rapid passages.

#### The Barré, Positions, etc.

The Barré is made by placing the first finger of the left hand across two or more strings at the same fret, the remaining fingers being left free to stop the strings as required.

In taking a Position the first finger is placed upon one string only. When it is placed at the first fret the hand is in the first position; second fret, second position, etc., every fret being a position.

The Barré is indicated by a numeral and the word "Bar," or letter B, and the positions by a numeral and asterisk (\*) placed above the staff, the figure denoting the fret at which the first finger is to be placed.

#### Right Hand Fingering.

Rest the little finger on the head of the banjo and curve the others so that the thumb will strike the strings about an inch farther from the bridge than the first finger.

When two or more notes are written one above the other they form what is called a chord and should be played all together as one note. A chord preceded by a waved line should be arpeggioed, that is, the notes should be played one after another, from lowest to highest, in quick succession. Avoid picking the strings with the nails.

The following signs are employed to indicate the fingers of the right hand: × for the thumb; · for the first finger; · · for the second finger, and · · · for the third finger. This sign ×-× signifies that the thumb is to slide from one string to another in playing the notes under which it is placed, and this · - ·

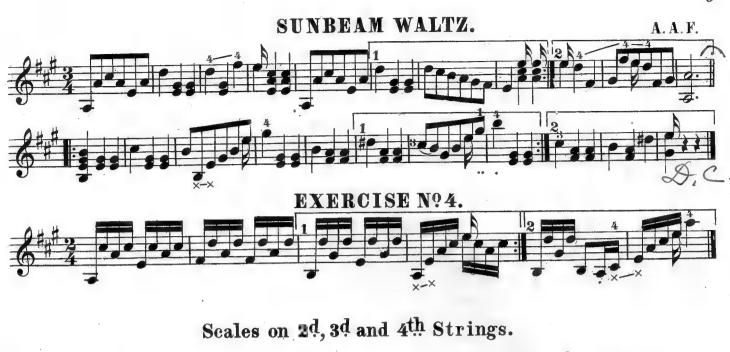
that the first finger is to slide in the same manner.

Always "pick" the first string with the second finger, the second string with the first finger, and the remaining three with the thumb, when not marked otherwise.

## KEY OF A. MAJOR. (Natural Key of the Banjo.)

Make every F. C. and G. sharp.







The lowest note in each measure is made on the 4th string; the next on the 3d; the next on the 2d; and the highest on the 1st. The lower figures indicate the frets and the upper ones, the fingers.

The notes upon the upper staff form the chords upon the lower one.



#### SCALE IN THIRDS.



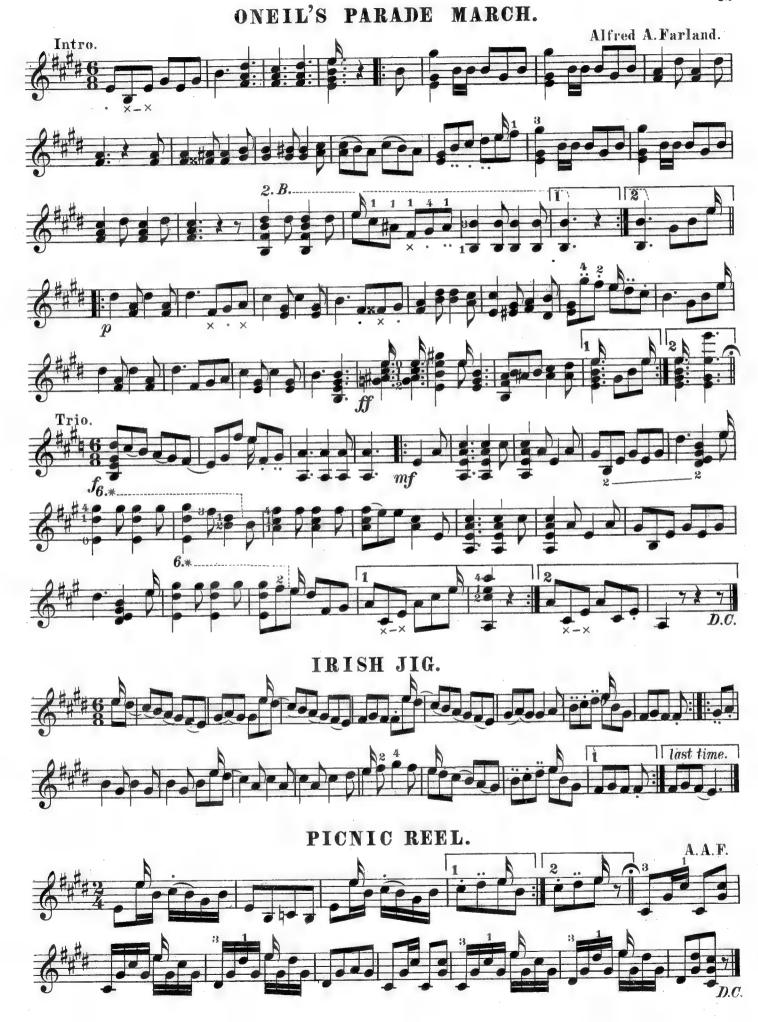
#### KEY OF F#. MINOR.

6000



# KEY OF E. MAJOR. Make every F.C.G. and D. sharp.





#### HARMONICS.

Harmonics are produced at the 4th, 5th, 7th, 9th, 12th, 16th and 19th frets, also at the 17th fret on the 5th string.

Those at the 4th, 9th and 16th frets sound a double octave higher than written, the others one octave.

In making them the finger must press the string with just sufficient force to prevent it from vibrating as if open; and as soon as the string is struck the finger must be removed.

Harmonics are designated by the letter H and a figure which indicates the fret.



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\*The chord marked D should be struck with the nail of the first finger. The notes which have a waved line under them are executed thus: close the hand and open the fingers one after another in quick succession allowing them to pass over all the strings. Commence with the first finger, allowing the nail of the little finger (which should be left quite long) to pass over the strings last, thus producing a good clear tone.

This movement is called the Drum Slide and chords which are to be played in this way are preceded by a waved line and marked D.S. or written in the form of a triplet as above.

#### Right Hand Harmonics.

Place the ball of the second finger of the right hand on the string at the desired fret and pick the string with the thumb under the hand, removing the finger immediately after.

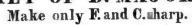
The left hand fingering is the same as in ordinary playing; the ball of the second finger must always be placed 12 frets from the left hand finger. R. Hand Harmonics are marked R.H.

#### SILVERY BELLS.

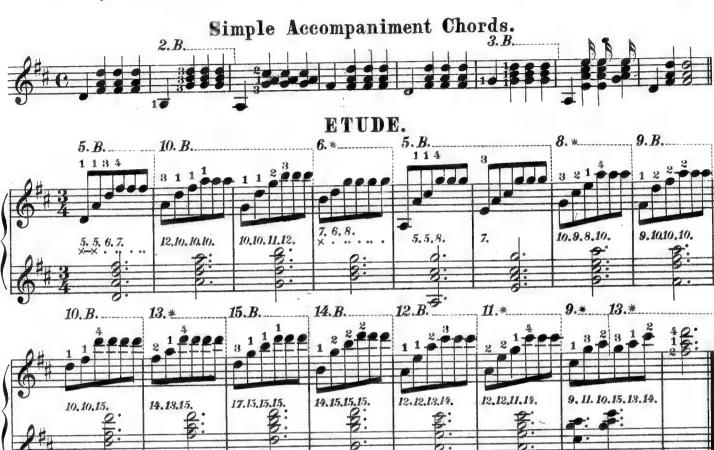




#### KEY OF D. MAJOR.











# KEY OF B. MINOR. SCALE.

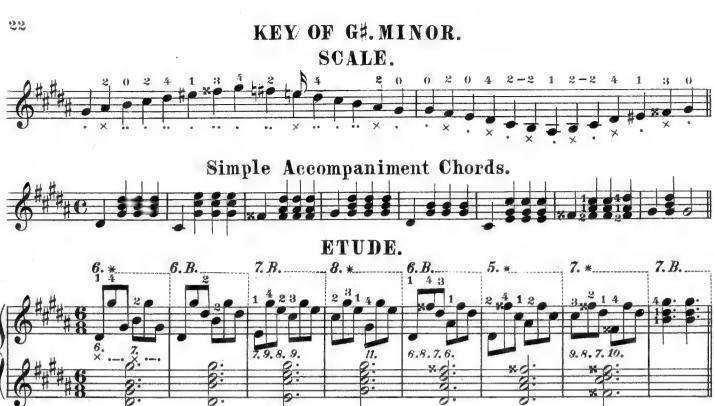


# KEY OF B. MAJOR. Make every F. C. G. D. and A. sharp. SCALE.



#### CARRIE SCHOTTISCHE.















#### KEY OF D#. MINOR.



### KEY OF C. MAJOR.

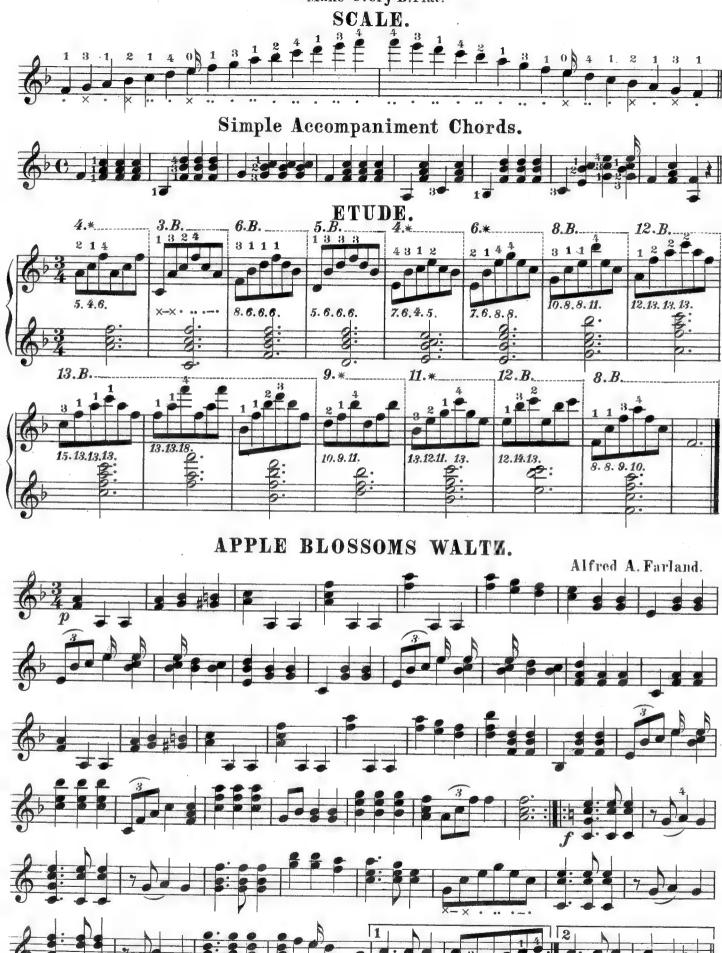


## KEY OF A. MINOR.



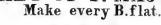


## KEY OF F. MAJOR. Make every B.flat.





## KEY OF F. MAJOR. Make every B.flat.







# KEY OF D. MINOR.



KEY OF Bo. MAJOR.
Make every B. and E. flat.



## KEY OF G. MINOR.



#### KEY OF Eb. MAJOR. Make every B.E. and A. flat.

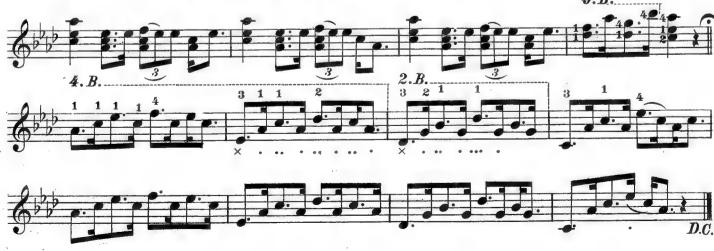




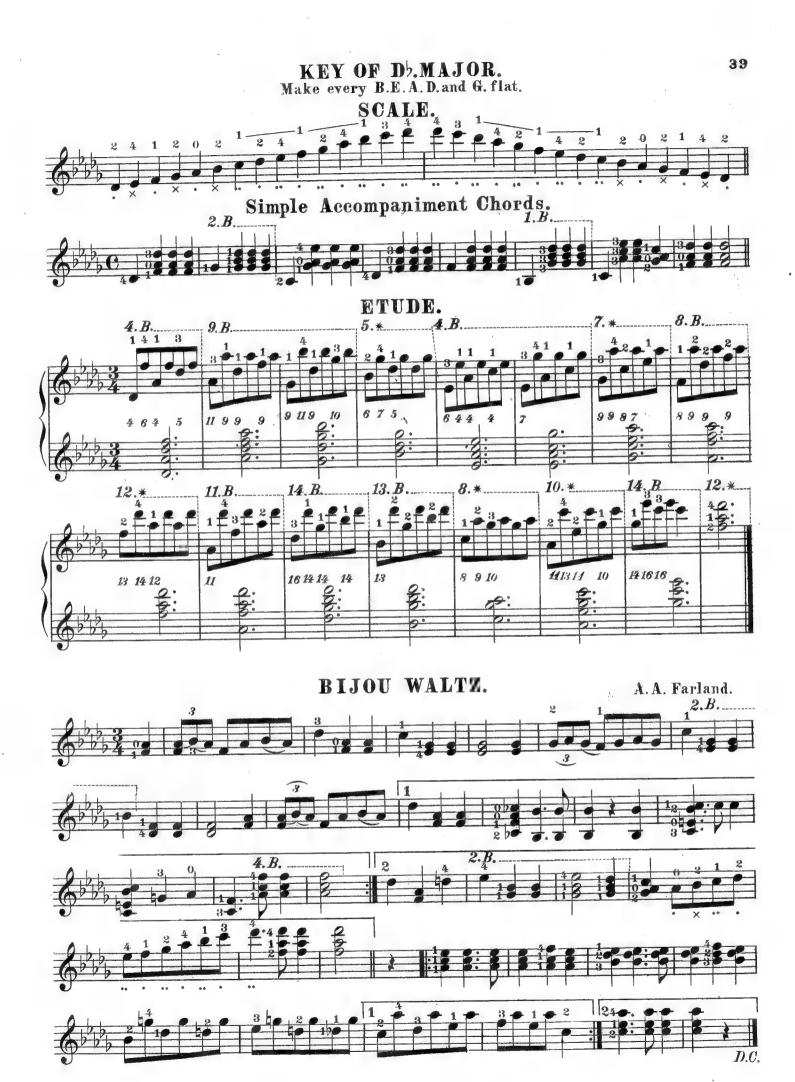
## KEY OF Ab. MAJOR.

Make every B.E.A.and D.flat.



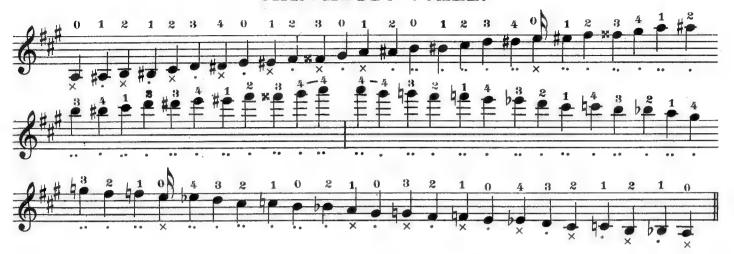








## CHROMATIC SCALE.



# 15th REGIMENT QUICKSTEP.

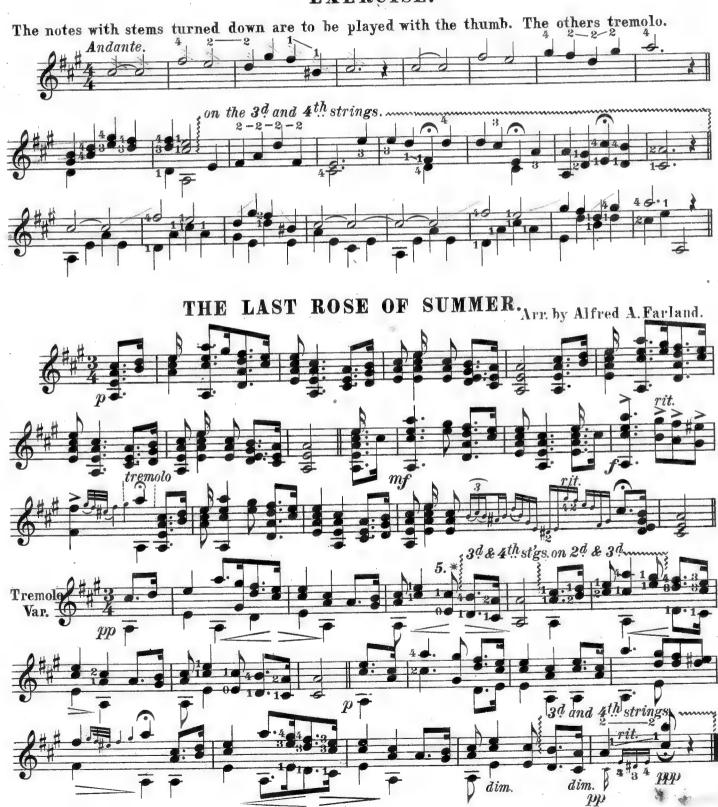


This movement is executed with the first finger which occillates very rapidly over the string, causing a continuous trill.

Sustained notes are played in this way and some melodies can be played tremolo, whilst the thumb at the same time plays an accompaniment upon the strings not in use for the melody, rendering a beautiful effect.

In playing tremolo the 3d finger should be rested on the head of the banjo instead of the 4th

## EXERCISE.





## NEARER MY GOD, TO THEE.









#### MYOSOTIS WALTZES.





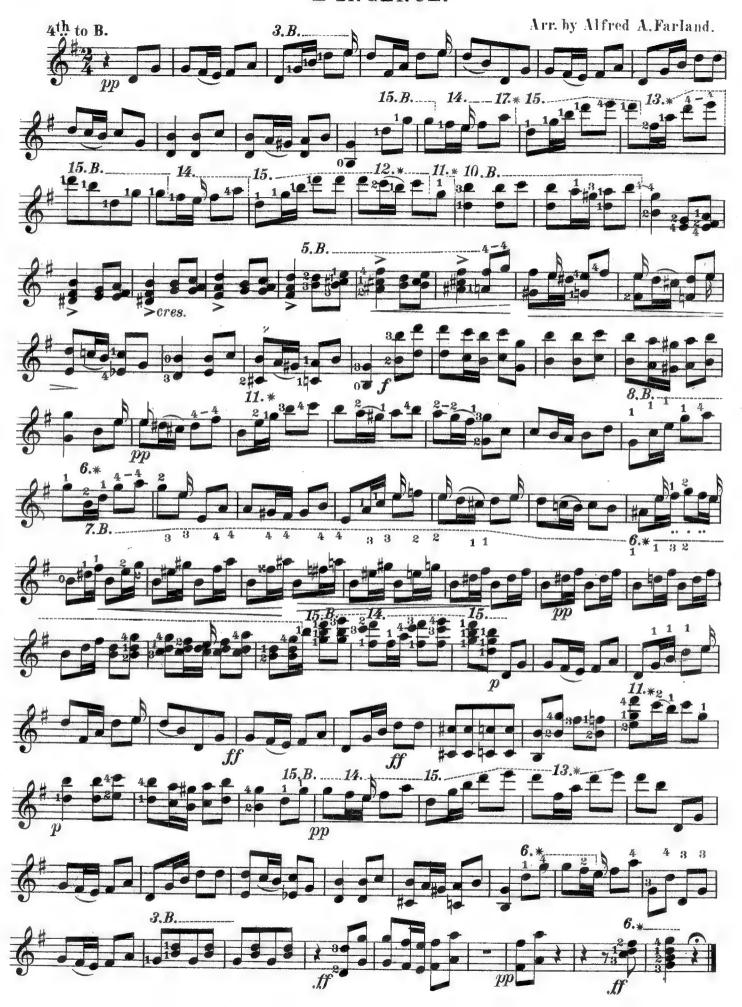


#### AULD LANG SYNE.









## FUNERAL MARCH OF A MARIONETTE.







## MADELEINE WALTZES.









#### STROKE OR THIMBLE PLAYING.

Partly close the hand allowing the first finger (upon which the thimble is worn) to project a little in advance of the others but held quite firmly against them.

Strike all chords with the thimble; also all single notes, excepting those made upon the 5th string, or marked with a x. They, as well as slurred or snapped notes, are to be played as usual.

A waved line under two or more notes signifies that they are to be played by sliding the thimble over the required strings.





This movement is introduced in marches &c. with splendid effect. It generally precedes a chord and is executed in the following manner.

THE DRUM ROLL.

Slide the thimble over the strings, "Pick" the 5th, and strike the chord immediately after. The fingers of the left hand must, of course, be placed upon the notes which form the chord, before commencing the roll.

In the following exercise the roll is written in small notes.





